

# NEWS LETTER

## PULL OF WAR VIEWS IN 2500 CHURCHES

By the Associated Press  
NEW YORK, Oct.

Pointed questions are contained in the ballots sent this week to 2500 Congregational and Christian churches in all 43 states, to which responses from 300,000 persons are

# SOCIAL ACTION

Published by the Council for Social Action of the  
Congregational and Christian Churches

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# Review and Preview

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## Social Action 1937-1938

SOCIAL ACTION is not the largest journal of public opinion in the country. It is not the most conservative. Nor the most liberal. Nor the most patronized by national advertisers. But it does claim to be one of the most sensitive to its constituency. Hence, because of requests from many sources for practical, concrete help in relating individuals to the social, economic, political problems which are the matrix of our day, SOCIAL ACTION has decided to issue a NEWS LETTER once each month.

This NEWS LETTER will be the regular number of the magazine appearing on the first of each month. As you will see in this, the first number, the NEWS LETTER is primarily a clearing house for experiments being worked out by churches, discussion groups, women's organizations, open forums and other social action church groups throughout the country. Certain experiments which merit particular attention will be consistently followed, their successes and their failures noted, modifications and improvements suggested. Month by month, a constructive policy will be suggested for groups which wish to make themselves effective on matters of current legislation. Specific problems before the rural churches, experiments in better race relations, attempts to contribute to the solution of international tensions—all of these *first-hand experiences* will find a place in the NEWS LETTER.

A small, intimate magazine of this sort, as flexible as the exigencies of the times, should be a genuine aid in translating Christianity into social and economic actualities.

## Social Action's Pamphlet Series

The middle-of-the-month number of SOCIAL ACTION will continue to be a research number. These numbers are prepared by the research staff or by specialists in the various fields with which they deal. After the material is assembled and written, it is presented to various authorities of divergent points of view for comments and suggestions. Frequently a pamphlet goes through many re-writings. Always the editorial committee tries to keep in mind the fact that the findings are being presented to church people—men and women who, by nature of their commitment to a cause and a Personality, are trying to *save the lost*, whether the lostness be personal or corporate. This fact provides an editorial policy which we hope to make increasingly apparent.

Among the publications immediately forthcoming are: CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION, by Hugh Vernon White; HOW TO READ A NEWSPAPER, by Paul Hutchinson; THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES, by Alfred Schmalz; THE HOME AND SOCIAL ACTION, by Grace Loucks Elliott, a preliminary TEXTBOOK FOR THE ECONOMIC PLEBISCITE.

## Subscriptions

A magazine needs subscribers if it is to be of genuine service. Of course, those of us who write for SOCIAL ACTION—and it is surprising how many men and women do contribute in a year's time—like to sit and read our favorite author. But a magazine has to be enjoyed by and be useful to more than its editors, its contributors, its like-minded friends. If SOCIAL ACTION is to serve the cause of justice, wisdom and righteousness—those great concepts of the prophets—then it must be read by a sufficiently large portion of our democracy to give such concepts mutuality and concreteness. In other words, if a million of us read the forthcoming pamphlet HOW TO READ A NEWSPAPER, a newspaper will become more important as an instru-



ment of democracy and *so will we*. Our separate and somewhat hazy ideas about the possibilities and responsibilities of newspapers will become, by and large, the same idea; our separate and timorous voices will become, for practical purposes, one great voice to be heard above the roar of propaganda. One million readers is quite a few. Hearst made it, and then began to accumulate circulation. However, he had a big idea to promote.

At present our "bundle orders" frequently run into many thousands because particular groups find certain issues adaptable to their purposes. The general subscription list now stands at 4200—all paid. We should make it 10,000 before the end of the year. This aim means, of necessity, a personal campaign in which the only sure procedure is for each convinced reader (there's a nice term) to pass the magazine to his friends. We shall be glad to furnish introductory copies for the purpose.

## Forthcoming

The September fifteenth issue of SOCIAL ACTION, first of this year's Pamphlet Series, will be CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION by Hugh Vernon White. Few men in the land are as well qualified to present this discussion as Mr. White. He is an active participant in the church's attempt to make real in action the tenets of its own philosophy and he is also a thoughtful observer of the current scene in many parts of the world. In this pamphlet, Mr. White says the things which many of us have been wanting to understand well enough to put into words. It is comforting to know *why* we do *what* we do, and it is inspiring—even to the point of action—to understand the inner necessity for a further outward expression of our convictions. If our churches miss out on CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION they will be the poorer—and they won't even know of their poverty, which is one variety of spiritual tragedy.

# The Council for Social Action

## A Report on Progress

By HUBERT HERRING

THE General Council at Oberlin in June 1934 created The Council for Social Action, and it directed this new body to do certain things. It said:

Give us facts. We want to know more about the struggles of social classes, more about the forces which make for justice.

Give us material for education. The Church must be the training school for citizenship. Help to make this possible.

Give us representation on the frontiers of modern life. Speak for us where hates are fostered and anger festers.

This was, in effect, the charter of the Council for Social Action.

The Council, now in its third year of life, would render an accounting. This might be done in terms of the ponderables—so many speeches, so many letters, so many publications. But the Council for Social Action knows how little such figures prove.

The Council's rendering of an account can best be expressed in more personal terms. I shall therefore recount the steps which we have taken in terms of the men and women who are working on the job. After all, it is for their salaries and expenses and tools that the budget is expended.

Calling the roll:

The Council first of all laid hands on Arthur E. Holt, professor in Chicago Theological Seminary, and made him chairman. There was no salary attached to this office, and plenty of work. Dr. Holt gave the Council a generous share of his time for two years. He spoke scores of times in churches, at state conferences, at regional and national gatherings, interpreting the church's social mission. At the end of his two



year term, Dr. Holt went to India and Africa, and out of that year's study and travel there comes a new body of interpretation. We like to count Dr. Holt as chief among our representatives, and his work may be variously assessed as foreign missions, home missions, international relations, race relations. He belongs to the apostolic line of the interpreters.

The Council elected me as its Director, and assigned me the task, in addition to general executive planning, of using my pen as a tool of social and international interpretation.

We then looked about and found a certain Frank W. McCulloch of Chicago, a lawyer, with Williams College, Harvard Law School, law practice, a generous share in social effort, and parents with a notable record as pleaders for social justice in a background. We said to Mr. McCulloch: Take Chicago as your laboratory. Study the problems of the unemployed, study the new movements in labor, the clashes between management and worker. Tell us what you find there. Serve the cause of industrial justice and fair play as our representative. Frank McCulloch is doing just this thing. He is a counsellor of the organized unemployed, has helped them in presenting their pleas and protests. He contributed his services to the Pullman Porters Union in their campaign for recognition. He worked with groups who fought discriminatory laws against Negroes in Chicago. He has gone into the hot centers of industrial confusion, and has helped to illuminate the issues and to verify the facts for the guidance of outsiders. His reports on the automobile strike of last fall, given before many audiences, in and out of the church, have been constructive and conducive to sober thinking. When police broke up the strikers' lines in South Chicago in June, killing ten and injuring more than a hundred, Mr. McCulloch was there and was able to report faithfully what he had seen and heard. Through him, the churches have a discriminating and intelligent reporter and adviser.

We turned to Katharine Terrill, and said to her: Your task

is to bring the ministers and the laymen into touch with the wealth of literature which is available on social issues. And Miss Terrill, out of her full experience with the sources of information, and out of her vital concern in social justice, serves the thousands who each year ask our help in planning programs on industrial questions, civil liberties, child labor, and a score of other subjects.

We turned to Alfred Schmalz, pastor in Belmont, Massachusetts, and asked him to become associate director of the Council. We asked him to take the leadership of our program in international relations, and to share the executive planning of the Council. Through Mr. Schmalz, the Congregational churches have a representative in all of the joint movements for peace. Through him, the Council keeps in touch with the American Friends Service Committee, whose annual institutes of international relations in ten centers have become our chief training schools for leaders in international thinking. Alfred Schmalz took the lead in the case of Kenneth Arnold, a student at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which refused to give him a degree unless the military science requirement was met. Mr. Arnold, a pacifist, was pleading the case of other conscientious objectors. Mr. Schmalz rallied the support of a considerable public. At last, after more than two years debate, the trustees of Massachusetts Institute of Technology changed their ruling. Mr. Schmalz has also served the churches through his speaking and writing. His irenic temper and sensitiveness to human values equip him as a social interpreter.

We invited Harold O. Hatcher to join our staff as a research director. Mr. Hatcher has strong roots in the soil of America. He grew up in rural Kentucky. From Kentucky he went to the University of Chicago and to Chicago Theological Seminary. He studied economics in Germany and worked with the Farmers Union in Illinois. Since joining the staff of the Council for Social Action, Harold Hatcher has carried through solid pieces of needed research—as is attested by our publication on



"The Insull Empire," "The Textile Primer," and "Steel and Men." He directed the peace plebiscite of 1935 and tabulated the results. He has given much time to the preparation of our magazine SOCIAL ACTION. And, in his spare hours, Harold Hatcher has built one of the greatest consumers' cooperatives in New York City—the Knickerbocker Village Cooperative.

We next turned to Elizabeth G. Whiting of Boston, and said to her: Take the message of the Council for Social Action to the churches of New England. Use Boston as your base and your laboratory. Pick a few churches, and work with them, helping them to discover ways in which a specific church can render definite service in the confused social problems of its own community. Mrs. Whiting, with long experience in connection with the National and City Y.W.C.A. and with the National League of Women Voters, has developed new procedures for churches which are ready actually to study and to work. She has led the way in establishing discussion groups, in uniting several churches for a survey of their community. She has carried the message of the Council to state and district associations, working closely with the existing women's and general organizations. Typical of the work which she has done was the all-day session on "Housing" held last winter in Pilgrim Hall, Boston. We also said to Mrs. Whiting: Organize a legislative committee which will keep an eye on national legislation which is pending, study that legislation, and make your reports back to the churches. This committee is at work, and includes economists, lawyers, ministers, with Mrs. Whiting as the executive.

We next invited Margueritte H. Bro of Chicago to represent the Council in the great area centering in Chicago. Mrs. Bro, with teaching experience in China, accustomed to working with churches and church people, and known for her writing in the fields of religious education and social action, has gone ahead with this task. During the past two years, she has visited many scores of churches, spoken before state, dis-

trict, and regional conferences. Lately, it has been decided to ask Mrs. Bro to give the major share of her time to the editing of SOCIAL ACTION.

We turned to Ferry L. Platt, pastor in Manhattan, Kansas, a man of dispassionate mind and of stubborn social sympathy, and asked him to represent us in the area of rural life. We said to Mr. Platt: Take Merom, Indiana, as your laboratory, work in it and out of it, know your communities and the churches which work there. Work with the new Merom Institute and help to make it a growing center for the interpretation of the rural ministry of the church. From that base, help the rest of us to understand our duty as American Christians toward the farmers of the country. Mr. Platt has dug into his job. He is serving the whole area, in which there are over 100 country churches of the Congregational-Christian fellowship, and is equipping himself as a competent interpreter of rural America to the rest of us, as is attested by those who have heard him in local institutes and state conferences.

We turned to Richard Fagley, fresh from graduate work in the London School of Economics, and asked him to help us in the business of digging facts and of putting those facts into form for use by the churches. Now we are further asking Mr. Fagley to make it his special business to carry the message of the Council to young peoples' groups.

Along what meridians do these men and women plan their services?

They keep in mind the four great objectives to which the Council is assigned:

First, the interpretation of the Christian gospel in terms of the relations between employer and employee.

Second, the assurance of an equitable deal for the farmer.

Third, the guarantee of citizenship rights to the Negro.

Fourth, the searching after pacific settlements of international disputes.



*How does the Council work?**First, by getting the facts.*

Every member of the staff is expected to be a getter of facts. Our staff touches many areas of social unrest, and each member is asked to use his eyes and ears for the good of the whole program—and to use them discriminately, accurately.

*Second, through publications.*

We publish SOCIAL ACTION twice a month. These pamphlet-magazines are designed to be read—and they are read.

SOCIAL ACTION reaches a regular subscription list which now tops 4,200. In addition, bundle orders bring the total distribution of each number up to 8,000, and in a few instances as high as 20,000. The subscription list, and the bundle orders, are steadily increasing. We are confident of doubling our usefulness by the end of another year.

*Third, through special personal service on literature.*

No matter what field of social interest concerns you, whether for a program on an institute or the preparation of an address or a sermon, write to our New York office for assistance. We receive thousands of such requests each year, and we invite other thousands. Furthermore, we furnish special packets of material for the use of leaders of discussion groups.

*Fourth, by direct social action on our social frontiers.*

I have already suggested some of the things which are to be included under such activity. In addition, there is the work of state and local social action committees. These activities may be followed in the pages of SOCIAL ACTION.

*Fifth, the carrying of the message of the Council by the spoken word.*

The members of the Council and of its staff have spoken in hundreds of churches, associations, institutes, state conferences.

*Sixth, through the pages of church and secular publications.*

This is not the least of the vehicles of interpretation. The

members of the Council and of its staff have during the past two years contributed scores of articles to *Advance*, *The Christian Century*, *The Adult Bible Class Magazine*, *The Pilgrim Highroad*, *The Missionary Herald*, as well as to a wide variety of secular newspapers and magazines.

But, as I said in the beginning, the tabulations prove little. The significance of the Council for Social Action lies in the fact that a great American protestant communion, with a record notable for social and missionary zeal, has found it possible to create a unique agency through which to express the corporate zeal of the churches for the winning of just and peaceful human relations.

It is difficult to incorporate an enthusiasm. There is social enthusiasm in the ranks of the Congregational and Christian churches. The problem is to take that enthusiasm, give it direction and force, so that these churches, united in this great national body, may make themselves felt on the difficult frontiers where the issues of industrial peace and justice, racial fair play, and international amity may be assured.

It is the genius of Christianity that it has not been afraid of impossible tasks.



## New Packets

Available after September fifteenth, four new study packets:

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL ACTION  
BETTER HOUSING  
RURAL PROBLEMS  
PEACE

The packets are complete, containing full study outline, devotional service, all source material—in the form of reprints, leaflets, bulletins—necessary for a four to ten weeks study.

Also there is a new booklet of four programs for women's groups based upon the same subjects. This book of programs is free.



# The Economic Plebiscite Takes Shape

By ALFRED SCHMALZ

A PLEBISCITE on economic questions will be conducted in our Congregational and Christian Churches, in accordance with the vote of the General Council at its meeting in June, 1936. This vote reads: "That the Council for Social Action be requested to take an economic plebiscite in 1937-8, the questions to be approved by the Executive Committee (of the General Council) before being sent out."

## Time

It has now been determined that the plebiscite itself will be conducted in the fall of 1938, probably toward the end of November, but that education in the issues which will appear on the ballot is to begin a year earlier, namely this fall and winter.

## Economic Justice and the Good Life

This is the second plebiscite conducted in our churches. On November 10, 1935 (Armistice Sunday) over 2,500 of our churches and some 200,000 individual members balloted on questions concerning world peace. The cooperation of our churches was a conclusive demonstration of their concern for a peaceful world. This second plebiscite on economic questions will similarly express their concern for a just world.

Such a concern for economic justice is implicit in our gospel. For we know that economic well-being is one of the necessary ingredients of the good life, and that our spiritual character is determined at least in part by what happens to us in our economic environment.

The truth of this statement scarcely needs to be labored, for all of our experience supports it. We know that congested slum housing has its evil spiritual effects in delinquency, crime and immorality, in souls starved of beauty. We know that

excessive hours at starvation wages produce bitterness and discouragement. Insecurity of employment results in fear and in the loss of ambition. Child labor means the stunting of children's minds and souls. All this is plainly visible about us. It has led us long since to conclude that the churches have a basic religious concern in man's economic welfare.

Thus, when the churches study economic issues in the light of the gospel's spiritual demands, they are not "mixing" into somebody else's business. Whose proper business is economic well-being if it is not ours? "Give us this day our daily bread," we have been taught to pray. The realization of that prayer in society would certainly mean that all men should enjoy an adequate standard of living. This is the concern of the churchman.

## Our Own Good Life

Furthermore, in dealing with economic issues we are concerning ourselves with matters in which we have a personal and intimate stake. It is sometimes falsely assumed that when the church considers economics it is laying down rules of conduct for a group outside itself. But what is the church? It is ourselves. We are not simply worshippers but are also persons engaged in making a living. Some of us are in business; others of us are workers; some are in the various professions—doctors, teachers, lawyers, ministers, engineers; many of us are housewives. It is our own economic behavior with which we deal when we ask ourselves questions about the society of which we are part.

All of these things will, of course, be part of the message that the plebiscite must lay upon the minds of the whole of our church membership. For not everyone assents to the premise that religion must concern itself with economic issues. One of our cooperative tasks must be to carry this conviction into our entire constituency, and to testify to the church's con-



cern for economic well-being. This task ought not be too difficult, for even the people who question the right of the church to deal with economic issues are nevertheless themselves much concerned with the solution of these issues. Poverty, unemployment, relief, labor-capital conflict—these and other problems constitute the major issues before the American people today. On every such issue we range ourselves on one side or the other. Perhaps thoughtfully, perhaps on the basis of prejudice or self-interest; nevertheless, earnestly. The way our economic problems are settled or solved makes a big difference to us; our actions prove it. Else, why do we take sides so quickly, and so emotionally? No doubt about it, everyone is today economics-conscious. We are weighing the pros and cons of all issues, are seeing their importance in the social scene, are making certain conclusions which will have their bearing upon the formation of that public opinion which in the end determines what shall be. It should not be hard to convince such ones of us that this intimate personal concern which we manifest in economic issues should also be the concern of our churches. For religion must always deal with the things that matter most in people's lives.

## Human Questions

It is a warmly human concern we have in conducting this plebiscite among us. We have no abstract interest in economic theory; the root of our concern is human welfare. Behind all our discussions will be such fundamental questions as these: what is happening to people today? why is there poverty in so rich a land? what changes can and should be made in order to secure the material well-being of all men? We must see the faces of men, women, children, those whose lives are pinched and frustrated by hard economic circumstance. If we are to help bring salvation to these neighbors, it is obvious that we must concern ourselves with basic economic questions.

## Answered by Ourselves

Ultimately, of course, these questions are not answered by experts, but by people like us. The experts are useful and necessary for the diagnosis of our ills and for the charting of courses that may be taken. But in the end it is the people—the average man and woman—who decide what we shall really do about poverty and insecurity. Already we are articulate, but we must voice our demands for a just economic order even more loudly than at present. And we must be sure that the decisions to which we come are sound and wise decisions. Democracy and the Kingdom of God are born out of hard thinking. Churches, therefore, which include in their educational program opportunities for the thoughtful discussion of fundamental economic issues are participating in a genuinely religious activity.

## Plebiscite Committee

What, now, are the issues around which we shall center our thought in this plebiscite? The stating of these major issues has been the task of a special Economic Plebiscite Committee, set up by the Council for Social Action from within and outside its own membership and assisted by the Council's research staff. The chairman of this committee is Dr. Willard L. Thorp, Director of Economic Research, Dun and Bradstreet, New York; other members of his committee are Mr. Henry P. Chandler, Chicago attorney, Mr. Lucius R. Eastman, President, Hill Brothers Company, New York, Mr. F. C. Van Cleef, Investment Counsellor, New York, Mr. Ordway Teed, Editor, Harper and Brothers, Rev. H. Paul Douglass, director of many surveys of churches and community life, Philadelphia, Rev. Allan K. Chalmers, Pastor, Broadway Tabernacle, New York City, and Rev. John C. Schroeder, Chairman, Council for Social Action. The committee has had the counsel of and has cooperated with the Executive Committee of the General Council.



## Areas of Social Concern

Preliminary study of the problem suggests the advisability of presenting seven areas of social concern to the churches for their discussion and counsel. There will be no final formulation of the specific questions to be voted on in the ballot until the time for the actual voting is nearer. Meanwhile the Economic Plebiscite Committee will work with the churches in a cooperative endeavor to discover the best possible ballot form. The areas presented for study are:

- I. Unemployment and Relief
- II. Agricultural Price Levels
- III. Labor Organization
- IV. Public Utilities
- V. Tariffs and Other Trade Barriers
- VI. Consumers Cooperatives
- VII. Capitalism

Comprehensive and non-partisan educational materials will be prepared by the Council for Social Action. A handbook will be published in the late fall. It is suggested that pastors plan a series of discussions during January and February, using this pamphlet as a text. Written popularly, it will appeal not only to study groups but to individual readers. Full information regarding educational plans and methods will in due course be sent to all pastors and will be published in forthcoming numbers of SOCIAL ACTION.

## Institutes

In addition to such helps, the Council will set up a series of one-day institutes in different sections of the country, for the purpose of stimulating church interest in the taking of the plebiscite and to prepare pastors and lay leaders for the conducting of an educational program in their own churches. These institutes will begin with a luncheon meeting for pastors and women leaders. The afternoon will be given over to

the discussion of educational methods and materials. In the evening there will be an address by some person of outstanding competence in the fields covered by the plebiscite. Teams composed of members of the Council and of its staff will make the round of these institutes.

### Incentive and Opportunity

The plebiscite should be utilized by all our churches to the full. It is one of the most useful tools for building an educational program around the social issues with which the churches in our generation have to deal. An incentive is often needed for doing even the most important of tasks. Therefore we shall all be helped to relate religion to economic issues by knowing that we participate in a project sponsored by our General Council, cooperated in by our fellow churches, and needed by our fellow humans.

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## Your Fall Program in Social Action

THE time to plan a program is at least a month ahead of the time to use the program—as many of us have learned from both dire and rewarding experience. Therefore September is your month to think—and then to call your social action committee together. The committee may approach its task from two angles: one, educating the whole church; two, planning definite projects which will link education with action.

### Education

The committee will do well to use the facilities already at hand: adult Church School classes, the women's association, the young people, the men's club. They will welcome suggestions—if you make them interesting enough. Talk with the presidents and program committees of these organizations; offer to help them put on a social action program. Make it

their program. After all, you aren't important. It's the idea which matters and when another man or woman makes the idea his own, then you have succeeded. Your best service may be to secure for the group a good speaker on a vital subject. Try for the man who is "tops" in his field; for one thing he is likely to be generous with his time and for another one such speaker is worth a whole series of "seconds." Or you may be most helpful by passing along to the proper person some of the social action program material now available. (If you do not already know the material, this is your chance to be pleased and proud.)

## Programs for Church Organizations

If your men's club has used only the "speaker type" of program, you might help to plan an innovation in the form of a two-way argument on some immediate social issue. Or you might set up a panel discussion in which four or five persons, after informing themselves on a program, carry on a conversation around a table on the platform while the audience listens in. Take the liveliest issue in your community, pick a chairman with a sense of humor, choose participants who actually study before they speak, and you will have a good meeting. There is even a strong possibility that someone—including, of course, the speakers—will learn something.

Your young people can be helped in somewhat the same fashion. Most youth groups, unless they are under particularly expert leadership, are wise in their use of ready-made program material for it is easy to wander afield and get nowhere. The *Pilgrim Youth Fellowship* (14 Beacon Street, Boston) can supply you with such material. Also you will want a copy of our pamphlet *YOUTH IN ACTION* (ten cents).

In our churches, the women's groups are best organized for a continuous program of education. For them we have just prepared four new complete programs including worship ser-



vice, study outline, suggestions for leader's talk: *THE CHURCH IN SOCIAL ACTION, PEACE, RURAL LIFE, CIVIL LIBERTIES*. We have also available new study packets on each of these four subjects. Without wishing to sound like a nostrum advertisement, we are nevertheless convinced that no matter what your social-economic problems may be, you will find help in these packets.

Any church group will also find useful a series of *Programs for Adult Groups* prepared by a committee of the Missions Council, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York City (ten cents). These programs are not promotional material but genuine programs on such subjects as: *THE CHURCH AND THE ECONOMIC ISSUE, WORLD PEACE, THE CHURCH IN RURAL AMERICA, THE NEAR EAST, DEEPENING OUR RELIGIOUS LIFE*. Each program is a complete unit.

The social action committee may wish to promote certain meetings of its own for large groups or for smaller group study. Possible subjects, particularly appropriate this year are:

1. Discussion of the findings of *The Oxford (England) Conference on Church State and Community*. This Conference was held last July with delegates from all over the world to consider the relation of the church to society. You will find reports in current issues of *ADVANCE, THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY*, in *THE OXFORD CONFERENCE NUMBER OF INFORMATION SERVICE*, from the Federal Council, 105 East Twenty-second Street, New York City (five cents). Along the same line you will enjoy studying *CHURCH AND STATE*, one of the latest *Headline Books* of the Foreign Policy Association, 8 West Fortieth Street, New York (twenty-five cents).

2. *Rural America*. This is the interdenominational home missions study course for 1937-38. Ferry L. Platt, our rural life secretary, has written a thirty-two page pamphlet *CHANGING RURAL AMERICA* (ten cents). This is the core of the afore-

mentioned new study packet RURAL AMERICA. (Twenty-five cents plus five cents postage.)

3. *Consumers Cooperation.* Many persons in our churches are joining "co-op" stores and credit unions. Behind such organizations is the illuminating story of their history, their principles, their present successes and failures, their place in a program of economic reform, their religious significance. Yes, of course, we have the study packet COOPERATIVES, double-size. (Fifty cents, five cents postage.)

## Action

Unless you are out for mental exercise and nothing more, social education should eventuate in action. Therefore the social action committee should endeavor to ask of each social issue studied: What can we do about this problem? We suggest three problems about which we will be glad to make further suggestions if you write to us. We can also put you in touch with the people who can help you further.

1. *Adequate Recreational Facilities.* Discover what recreational facilities are available to your young people; look over your town's playgrounds, if any, and inspect their equipment. Get answers to the questions—Is there a ball field? Is play supervised by an athletic director? Is there a community center or "Y" in which, during the winter, boys and girls may gather regularly for sports? not to mention "dates"? What resources outside your community might render you assistance?

2. *A Cooperative Store or Credit Union.* Obviously, you are not likely to start with a store. Most likely you will start with a study club, a buying club, and then build up capital. This subject is particularly adapted for action with study and more study to facilitate further action.

3. *A Local Peace Council.* The essence of the local peace council is representation of every organization in town which makes peace part of its total program—churches, women's clubs, granges, service clubs, the "Y", and so forth. If you have such a peace council you can go ahead with a genuine

program of community education on peace issues, and you can register the sentiment of your community at Washington.

### Looking Ahead

Plan a special Armistice Day commemoration service in your own church, or a union service of all the churches in your community. Help the young people's societies to arrange a rally. Put on a peace play. Sponsor an exhibit of peace posters and peace literature. Arrange with your town library for the showing of recent books on international relations.

Education on economic issues, in preparation for the plebiscite to be taken in the fall of 1938, will begin in November when one-day institutes will be held in many centers under the leadership of staff and directors of the Council for Social Action. By January a textbook will be available. Plan now to set aside a period after the first of the year for intensive study of religion and economics. In a later number of the NEWS LETTER we shall suggest ways of making this period of education thoroughly rewarding. In the meantime—one alert mind can activate the social action committee and the social action committee can activate a church.

## A Growing Edge

"We do need some quite simple, inexpensive literature to scatter about. *Social Action* is too heavy for a lot of people. It doesn't touch their 'growing edge.' We might take a hint from *True Story* and such. One article or story telling about a particular person or family in connection with the auto strike, housing problem, or whatever might make the connection. It would be a point at which a lot of people would start reading. It would be a 'speech starter.' It might be a lot of things." The NEWS LETTER is the place for these true stories. They can come only from those readers who are keen to sharpen the 'growing edge' of genuine democracy. Tell the story simply and share it with us.



## Your Social Action Committee

STAMP

COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL ACTION

289 Fourth Avenue

New York City

THIS post card, addressed to us, is to remind you to send us the names and addresses of your church Social Action Committee.

Some churches, we know, do not have a committee which they call by the name "social action." They may have "Citizenship" or "Social Relations" committees. The name is not important. Nor need there be uniformity in the special functions performed. We hope, however, that in every church there will be some group, small or large, which is attempting to relate religion to social problems and which is helping the church as a whole to think of its program in terms of the perplexing social issues which confront this generation.

In some churches which have no official social action committee, an unofficial group is working at the social problem all the time. Usually these individuals meet together in their homes on Sunday night or during the week and afford the church real, although perhaps indirect, leadership. Although

such a group is not officially recognized as a standing committee of the church, it is an important group.

Sometimes we are asked whether it is really necessary for a church to have a special social action committee: cannot the social action job be done through organizations already in existence? It is sometimes suggested that the missionary committee might well take on the promotion of social action as one of its essential activities. Sometimes a men's class or an adult forum or a women's association is making so direct an attack upon the social problem that there seems no need for organizing the same people into another kind of committee. We recognize these resources and urge the churches to consider well whether or not their present organizational set-up may already be adequate for a real social action program.

Each church must, of course, survey its own possibilities. We think, however, that churches which set about organizing a special social action committee, dealing specifically with such social problems as war, unemployment and relief, labor disputes, violations of civil liberty, race discrimination, liquor control, gambling, crime, will be in a better position to accomplish definite tasks than those churches in which social action is a minor concern of some long-existing organization. Moreover, when a fresh start is made by organizing a new committee for this specific purpose, it is often possible to secure the services on that committee of persons who have a special enthusiasm for its work but who are not now active in any department of the church. In this way, the services of people of diversified interests are enlisted.

When your social action committee is organized, we suggest that its members read the *Social Action Primer*. This handbook presents ways in which a newly formed committee may find its place in relation to the church's total task. When the membership of the committee is settled upon, please invest in a penny post card and send us the names of your Social Action Committee.

## Some Did These Things

From Wisconsin: "Last Wednesday there was held in Madison Wisconsin's first Conference on the Cause and Cure of War. Sponsored by 14 women's organizations. Mrs. Stephen Peabody, the most able wife of our Ripon minister, was responsible for the conference . . . . It was good. About 500 women from 47 Wisconsin communities there and all most enthusiastic over the turn out." Then follows an account of the program and discussion.

A Wisconsin Minister: "Tomorrow I go down to Madison again on one of my trips as a lobbyist. Out state social action committee has been backing a sterilization measure which follows pretty much the recommendations of the American Neurological Association, also the medical sub-committee recommendations of our recent Citizen's Committee Report submitted to the governor . . . . Have done some other work in fighting a bill to make military training compulsory in the University for the basic courses . . . . As for the attempt to open the state to licensed slot machines, eac., it went hard at first but after determined opposition to no less than four bills with the strongest opposition coming from the chief of police in Milwaukee we did convince the legislature the state didn't want to alter its long established policy and begin to let down the bars."

As *Social Action* readers know, the Committee for the Defense of Civil Rights in Tampa under the leadership of its chairman, Rev. Walter C. Metcalf, has carried on a valiant fight to bring the floggers of Joseph Shoemaker and his two companions to justice. The Committee now reports that "nineteen months after this atrocious crime not one guilty person has been jailed." Four of the eleven men have never even had to stand trial and "the Florida Supreme Court has held up the decision while the convicted men are allowed to roam at will through the country" . . . "Judge Dewell has consistently re-



fused to set dates on the murder indictments." . . . . The Ku Klux Klan which is the power back of the Tampa floggings is holding open meetings in Tampa. The Committee is anxious to have the LaFollette Committee investigate Klan activities in Florida. They also report that "letters from across the country help." Mr. Metcalf appeals: "Have your friends write"——

To:

GOVERNOR FRED P. CONE, State Capitol, Tallahassee, Florida.

Ask him to appoint a new judge in the place of Judge Robert T. Dewell; to appoint J. Rex Farrior as special prosecutor in this case.

J. REX FARRIOR, State Attorney, Tallahassee, Florida.

Assure him of your interest and support in the prosecution of these cases.

SENATOR ROBERT M. LAFOLLETTE, Senate Office Building,  
Washington, D. C.

Urge that his committee investigating Ku Klux Klan activities in Florida.

From a report by President Albert W. Palmer, Chicago Theological Seminary, of the Citizens Mass Meeting held June eighth, in the Chicago Civic Opera House: "By a most fortunate and unusual circumstance, the Church on this occasion (the killing of ten men and wounding of others in a clash between the police and a parade of men, women and children, on a public street as they were approaching the gates of the Republic Steel plant to do peaceful picketing and display placards inviting workers still inside the plant to join their strike) found itself facing a tense labor situation and able to depend upon its own witnesses and observers instead of taking hearsay evidence. It so happened that three members of the Commission on Church and Industry of the Chicago Church Federation and six students from the Chicago Theological Seminary, a young minister, Chester B. Fisk, Chairman of the Illinois, Congregational Conference Committee on Social Action, were all present in the crowd when it was fired upon by police. Indisputable

evidence, therefore, is available by non-partisan observers who were there in the interest of religion and social justice." Mary Heaton Vorse further reports of Mr. Fiske, "He heard the shots, saw the people give way and he took pictures of the whole fight. He heard a man crying, 'I am going as fast as I can,' as police clubbed him, took pictures of men being shot, of men beaten to the ground. In the end he was arrested, thrown in jail and kept incommunicado for nineteen hours. His pictures were taken from him."

From Michigan: "I am glad to tell you how our Peace Program, which we put in our Grange, was developed. Thanks to you and to the Emergency Peace Campaign, we had plenty of material." Then follows a thoroughly interesting and practical program which included a panel discussion and a short play, as well as music and worship service.

From Massachusetts comes description of "a sit-down tour with the Social Action Committee." The Committee has provided a list of books to be read on Sundays "as a means of knowing other nationalities better." If you would like to have the list, write to us.

From Pittsburgh a report of "an enthusiastic assembly of social action boosters"—150 of them—in an all-day session devoted to discussion of such topics as: the position of a church and its minister in a strike situation; child tramps of America; cooperative banking, buying, distribution; the Jewish situation in Palestine; the share-croppers' plight in Mississippi. The program has two noteworthy aspects: it dealt with concrete situations and laymen took a leading part in the discussion.

The Social Relations Committee of Waltham, Massachusetts, inserts a slip-sheet in the Sunday morning bulletin of that church. This single sheet presents specific situations in the problems of peace, race relations, industrial relations, together with a concrete suggestion for action. If you want sample copies of these insertions, write to: Rev. A. William Loos, First

Congregational Church. He has not said that he can supply samples, but they are well worth requesting.

From Washington: "The Women's Social Action Committee of our church has come to life after an incubation period of a year and a half. The first project is raising money to help finance a delegate to the Institute of International Relations. I'm not expecting too much of that committee but I'm positive that if I invite them here for lunch they will meet again. My faith in the power of food gives me a sense of security and an optimistic mind. There is mutuality in eating."

From Washington: "Our Sunday evening discussion group grows in numbers and quality. (I have no more chairs.) Each one wants to bring a friend. We start with food. By the time the dishes are washed each is a friend of the other, new members and old, and though we may differ 'wildly' and widely we still love each other by the end of the evening. Why are some things so hard . . . . Our ambition is to form a Co-operative Council for the purpose of promoting Cooperative education. After sending invitations, arranging for a meeting place and planning a program, two men were present besides the committee. They represented the bar-tenders union. What would you do?

From Wisconsin: "Many of us here in Wisconsin are quite proud of our Labor Relations Act (the Wisconsin Wage Act). Our governor has been able to say that the public policy in Wisconsin shall be to first exhaust every possibility of settlement via the offices of the labor board before strikes shall be declared. The board has quite a good record for settlements in its first few weeks of existence. I appeared before a senate committee on behalf of the measure when it was before the senate. Did so as an individual, but was quoted in the press as secretary of the social action committee of the Congregational Conference . . . . Even if the press did fail to say I spoke for myself I'm glad I put in my appearance so that nobody can ever say that the Church was silent when the labor bill was not yet law."



## They Say

From member of Ozark Consumers Cooperative Association: "When I received the first issue (of SOCIAL ACTION) it was quite beyond my ability to comprehend that the Church was at last beginning to function in a practical manner. I used to be a rather severe critic of the Church, not being at all concerned as to life after death. Through the efforts of one of our contemporary religious pioneers . . . . I began to see that there was a bare possibility that the Church could yet redeem itself and become a useful instrument in society. SOCIAL ACTION convinces me that Church leadership is far beyond the laity and is really doing something fundamental in 'the more abundant life' for all. More power to you!"

From Vermont: "You ask for my honest reaction to SOCIAL ACTION . . . . The point of view of others does not seem to have much expression and I feel as I read it that there is always another side even when I do not know about it. In spite of your arguments, I have changed my mind about the Child Labor amendment and am against it."

From Massachusetts: "I cannot say enough of the valuable information brought to us by SOCIAL ACTION. It is a remarkably fine approach to most important subjects."

From Iowa. "I had an opportunity to speak before one hundred of our women at an Association meeting and I enthused about the magazine SOCIAL ACTION . . . I don't see how it could be any finer."

From Portland, Maine: "The magazine is interesting. Some of the material I approve of. Some is far too radical to suit me."

From Colorado: "I have recently joined the Congregational Church but I have been deeply interested in the C.S.A. ever since it was formed. I had expected to subscribe for your

organ, but when I heard it was published semi-monthly I hesitated simple because I am chronically swamped with reading material I cannot read. A wise friend passed on to me two copies; after reading them I felt I could not get along without your little paper."

From Arkansas: "Will you please inject a dollar's worth of new life into my subscription, which I believe has actually expired. I certainly value highly the numbers of SOCIAL ACTION. Even those I do not read at once are valuable for reference . . . . A fine piece of work. Go to it."

From Ohio: "I like your magazine very much. I do not always agree with you but I am roused to better thinking and deeper interest and a consciousness of my own ignorance along many lines after I have read your magazine each month."

From Massachusetts: "I think SOCIAL ACTION is great. I have no criticism to make other than—keep up the good work!"

From New Hampshire: "The magazine is one of the best sources of material to stimulate thinking, direct study and lead to creative activity that I know of."

From California: "As I am engaged in work with another movement which will do much to overcome these social conditions, I cannot subscribe just now for the magazine."

From *War Registers League*: "I think SOCIAL ACTION is certainly one of the most informative and stimulating pieces of educational propaganda I have seen. It is difficult to express how thrilling it is to see facts and figures made so clear and interesting and to see linked with the fine social message which should be that of every church."

From Oregon: "Have had to cut on my magazines a good deal and thought I would borrow someone's SOCIAL ACTION for this year, but guess I'll renew and lend mine!"



From Washington, D. C.: "I wish to compliment you on the high standard of excellence maintained in this publication."

From Long Beach, California: "I am deeply interested in the work the Council is doing, or trying to do. I am quite pessimistic, however, for it looks to me as if men are incapable of learning how to live together . . . . I'd like to be an optimist but I can't . . . . However we brave it out, we men are a little breed."

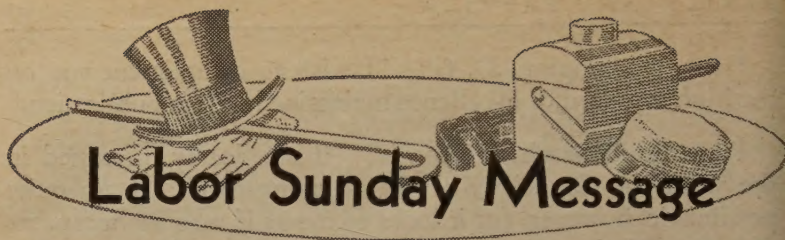
From Emporia, Kansas: "I find myself relying more and more upon this little magazine. It makes real and active the teaching of the church as nothing else ever has for me. I cannot understand how any Christian in our church can ignore its philosophy."

From Oregon: "A great periodical! The one biggest thing anyone could do is to get a wide reading of SOCIAL ACTION. I'm for it 100%."

From Delaware: "It is very encouraging to note in some of my material from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, that you are presenting the problems of labor and allied problems, for many of us feel that the voice of the church has been sadly silent regarding social and economic issues."

From Wisconsin: "I have carefully looked over your *Programs for Women's Work*, and consider that you people have done a splendid piece of work on them. They are very attractively gotten up; *fine* in content; suggestive of more material to be used in connection with each individual program. I really can't see how these programs could be improved upon. I am so happy they are going out over our state to all our church women. Would it be possible for us to get 200 copies of Ferry Platt's "Changing Rural America" to send out in our Social Action packet since part of the study course this year is Rural America?"





Each year a "Labor Sunday Message" is prepared by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and is widely distributed to churches all across the country. This year a message is also available from the United Christian Council for Democracy, an interdenominational organization of Christians committed to radical social change.

You may wish to use these messages in some such ways as the following:

Read them to your congregation the Sunday before Labor Day; use their contents in preparing your sermon; write for extra copies to distribute after the service. Both the Federal Council and the United Christian Council for Democracy quote the following rates: single copy, 4 cents; \$1.20 for 100; \$4.60 for 500 copies; \$6.60 for 1000. The Federal Council can provide you with copies of its message that have no printing on the cover for \$1.00 a hundred, and your local printer or mimeographer can put your Order of Service on the cover page.

Discuss the content of the messages in your men's and women's classes.

Send copies of the messages to your local newspaper with the request that they be published on the release date.

Address:

DEPARTMENT OF THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL SERVICE  
Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America

105 East 22nd Street, New York, N. Y.

UNITED CHRISTIAN COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRACY

22 Forest Avenue, Albany, New York